

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 15223

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: OXEC, CH, JA
SUBJECT: STUDENT EXCHANGES WITH PRC

REF: STATE 207175

1. WHILE PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA SAID IN TELEVISION INTERVIEW AUGUST 21 THAT HE WELCOMED CHINESE REQUEST TO SEND MORE STUDENTS TO JAPAN, GOJ OFFICIALS DOUBT THAT JAPAN WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE ANYTHING LIKE 500 STUDENTS CHINESE WOULD LIKE TO SEND. MOFA CHINA DIVISION DEPDIR SUGIYAMA INFORMED EMBOFF AUGUST 22 THAT GOJ IN PRELIMINARY INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, INCLUDING EDUCATION MINISTRY, IS WORKING ON TENTATIVE ACCEPTANCE FIGURE OF 100 CHINESE STUDENTS BY APRIL 1979, START OF NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR IN JAPAN.

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2. ACADEMIC PROBLEMS TO BE RESOLVED, SAID SUGIYAMA, INCLUDE SHORTER SCHOOLING CHINESE STUDENTS RECEIVED PRIOR TO ENTERING UNIVERSITY AND LIMITED FACILITIES FOR LANGUAGE TRAINING IN JAPAN. (AT PRESENT, ONLY TWO STATE-RUN UNIVERSITIES GIVE JAPANESE-LANGUAGE CLASSES TO TOTAL OF NEARLY 200 STUDENTS.) ADDITIONALLY, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, BOARDING FACILITIES FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS ARE SCARCE,

ACCOMMODATING ONLY ABOUT 1200 AT PRESENT. TO ADD TO THESE PROBLEMS, CHINESE HAVE NOT BEEN SPECIFIC AS TO FIELDS OF STUDY FOR PROPOSED STUDENTS, ALTHOUGH THEY EMPHASIZED THAT MAJORITY WOULD BE IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. THIS, HOWEVER, RAISES FURTHER QUESTIONS OF ACADEMIC COMPETENCE, GIVEN ACKNOWLEDGED INADEQUACY OF S & T EDUCATION TO POST-CULTURAL REVOLUTION GENERATION OF PRC STUDENTS.

3. ACCORDING TO MOFA STATISTICS, THERE ARE CURRENTLY 23 STUDENTS NOW IN JAPAN FROM PRC, COMPARED WITH OVER 2700 CHINESE STUDENTS FROM OTHER AREAS, MAJORITY FROM TAIWAN AND TOTAL OF APPROXIMATELY 5700 FOREIGN STUDENTS IN JAPAN OVER-ALL. PRC REQUEST FOR JAPAN TO TAKE 500 STUDENTS THUS WOULD REPRESENT AN INCREASE OF ALMOST 10 PER CENT IN TOTAL FOREIGN STUDENT POPULATION IN JAPAN, A FIGURE SUGIYAMA SAID WAS JUST TOO HIGH FOR JAPANESE TO COPE WITH FOR COMING ACADEMIC YEAR.

4. SUGIYAMA NOTED INCIDENTALLY THAT PRESS REPORTS THAT FULL NEGOTIATIONS ON CHINESE PLAN WOULD TAKE PLACE WHEN PRC EDUCATIONAL MISSION ARRIVED IN TOKYO NEXT MONTH WERE INACCURATE. SUGIYAMA EXPLAINED THAT PURPOSE OF PRC EDUCATIONAL MISSION, ARRANGED BEFORE RECENT CHINESE STUDENT REQUESTS, WAS SIMPLY TO STUDY JAPANESE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING. MANSFIELD

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